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ABSTRACT

The on-going project, first initiated at the University of Minnesota in the spring of 1973, has two objectives: (1) to provide interested undergraduate women at the university with research and development training in Women's Studies; and (2) to provide metropolitan area high schools with information and education regarding the women's movement. College students enrolled in this two-quarter course spend the first quarter preparing informative presentations on the women's movement. During the second quarter the students go into local high schools and deliver the presentations. This report describes the project and offers hints to others who may be interested in developing a similar course. The following are discussed: (1) project background; (2) hints for preparing to offer a women's studies course; and (3) course curriculum, requirements, and objectives. A project sample syllabus is included. The appendixes contain samples of advertisements used by the project, a news release, a letter to high school administrators explaining the project, a proposal form outline, course evaluation form, and a course bibliography. (Author/RM)

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ED 096233

INTRODUCING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

A Directed Study Project for Undergraduates

offered by the

Minnesota Women's Center

and the

Living-Learning Center

University of Minnesota, 1973

Etta Magnusen - Coordinator
Jodi Wetzel - Faculty Advisor

SP 007 780

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Background

The directed study project, "Introducing High School Students to the Women's Movement," was initiated in the spring of 1973. It has two objectives:

> To provide metropolitan area high schools with information and education regarding the women's movement.
>
> Secondly, to provide interested undergraduate women at the University of Minnesota with research and development training in Women's Studies.

The Minnesota Women's Center (MWC) has received numerous requests from secondary school educators for speakers on women's issues. In discussions with other feminists, staff members found that others were being overwhelmed with the same type of request. It appeared that there were not enough of us who had either the time or the motivation to engage in this type of activity. There was a feeling among some of the feminists that a "one-hour program on a Friday afternoon" was not adequate to interact in a meaningful way with high school students. We agreed.

Some experimental courses in women's studies were being offered in the College of Liberal Arts (CLA). A few (very few) courses were being offered as a part of the regular curriculum in one or two departments. Many students were developing independent study projects with the guidance of the MWC staff and cooperative faculty sponsors. Several of these students were past the point of doing research - they wanted to become actively involved in something which would enable them to interact with other women.

It was out of this situation that the idea of a directed study project evolved.

Through the Living-Learning Center (LLC), a part of University College at the University of Minnesota, students are offered the

opportunity to engage in community projects as a part of their liberal arts education. A proposal was made to LLC for half the funding for the project. The full cooperation of the LLC staff as well as the funding has made this project a reality.

This course will be offered at the University of Minnesota in a two-quarter sequence fall and winter or winter and spring of 1973-74. The first quarter will be spent preparing the students for their presentations in the schools and the second quarter will be spent in actual interaction with high school students. The course will be a 6-8 credit project.

In Preparation for Offering the Course on Your Campus

(1) Obtain a directed study Women's Studies project listing in the "courses offered" section of the college bulletin. (See Appendix 1.)

(2) Place advertisements in the student newspaper. (See Appendix 2.)

(3) Send a news release to the local media outlining the plans for the course. Hopefully this will be read by secondary school educators, parents and interested students. (See Appendix 3.)

(4) Prepare and send out a letter to principals, department heads, curriculum coordinators in all public and private high schools in the area. (See Appendix 4.)

(5) Keep a list of high schools which indicate an interest in participation. A follow-up phone call can be made within a week after the school has received the letter in order to set up an appointment for discussion with involved faculty. It may be necessary to make a personal visit to educators to "sell" them on the idea of participating in the project. During fall, 1973, and winter, 1974, this work will be done by the undergraduates themselves. In the experimental quarter it was often done by the coordinator.

Course Curriculum

During the experimental quarter we found that weekly meetings of the students were essential in order to share information, exchange

ideas, make suggestions on each other's presentations and to provide continuity for the course. We found from the student evaluations of the project that one quarter did not allow adequate time to accomplish our goals and objectives. Undergraduates came to the project with varying levels of experience and consciousness. Some were much better prepared than others for dealing with a high school audience. We decided upon the two-quarter sequence in order to better provide each student with background information and adequate preparation time.

Course Requirements

We would suggest that each person taking this course for credit be required to:

(1) Keep a journal in which she records her reactions to the readings, presentations and group discussions as well as any other relevant comments. This could serve as an ongoing evaluation of the project.

(2) Under separate cover she should keep a running account of her own project. Just exactly what form this would take will, of course, be determined by the choice of project. This should include all additional readings done, resource materials and contacts utilized, any additional research data and a copy or description of the presentation, and a description of the experience in making faculty contact.

(3) She should draw up a contract presenting objectives and goals for her project. (See Appendix 5.) The contract should include the tentative number of presentations to be made or the number of days (weeks) to be spent in the high school. Here flexibility is necessary. For example, a group of three students in the experimental quarter went to the high school they graduated from and proposed a project whereby they would videotape several rap sessions of high school students discussing attitudes toward sex roles. They had several taping sessions. The final project is an excellent tape which they edited for use as a resource when preparing classroom presentations which were appropriate for high school students. One student made a film which she used as a discussion aid. Another group of two put together a dramatic presentation which they used as a consciousness-raising technique. (See Appendix 5.)

(4) Turn in evaluations of the presentations and/or interactions from the high school students, the high school faculty contact(s). (The coordinator may or may not wish to accompany the undergraduates during presentations but it would be valuable to have an evaluation by either the coordinator or a peer during the presentation(s). (See Appendix 6.)

Course Objectives

(1) To enable undergraduates to learn about adolescent attitudes toward sex roles;

(2) To become informed about the existence and degree of sexism in today's high schools;

(3) To attempt to provide an educational experience for high school students which may act as a catalyst;

(4) To provide an opportunity for undergraduates to do a community (living-learning) project for academic credit;

(5) To enable the undergraduate and high school students to increase their knowledge of the women's movement;

(6) To raise the consciousness of educators regarding sexism in their institutions;

(7) To provide a more structured directed-study setting for undergraduates unprepared for independent study.

PROJECT SAMPLE SYLLABUS
Fall Quarter,. 1973

Coordinator:
Etta Magnusen, 373-3850
331 Walter Library

Faculty Advisor:
Jodi Wetzel, 373-3850
307 Walter Library

Minnesota Women's Center
301 Walter Library
373-3850

Living-Learning Center
201 Wesbrook Hall
373-9906

October 3 — Enrollment limit - 15; meeting, 2-3 hours

First group meeting

(1) Get acquainted with each other and the Project; each person should answer such questions as:

(a) Who am I?
(b) What am I dong here?
(c) What do I wish to accomplish?
(d) What experiences have I had which may be helpful?

(2) Discuss objectives as outlined in handout (additions and suggestions from participants solicited and incorporated).

(3) Explain course requirements (by staff members) and discuss with students.

(4) Select permanent meeting time.

Assign: Adolescent Girl in Conflict, Chapters 3, 4, 6, 7; pay special attention to these chapters.

October 10 — Adolescent Attitudes re: Sex Roles

Second group meeting

Discuss attitudes among adolescents (particularly females) regarding their own identities and their relationships with their peers of both sexes - point out stereotypes and myths regarding masculinity and femininity. Discuss goals of the male - goals of the female.

Suggested resources:

(1) MWC videotape of high school rap groups discussing sex roles

(2) Videotape "Makeout"

(3) Selected readings from How to Get a Teenage Boy and What to Do With Him When You've Got Him, by Ellen Peck. (The stereotypes in this book are so obvious that they seem satirical but we have found it to be an excellent discussion tool.)

Assign: reading in Feminist Studies Journal, Volumes I and II, "School's Role in Sex Stereotyping," by Betty Levy - special attention to pages 16-18.

October 17 — Adolescent Attitudes re: Sex Roles (continued)

Third group meeting — Discuss selected case histories and readings from Adolescent Girls in Conflict by Konopka - Compare experience with undergraduates' personal adolescent experiences.

Handout - list of statements about girls' adolescent experience (see example) i.e., list of barbarous rituals from Sisterhood is Powerful, pp. 161-165.

Assign: Growing Up Female in America: Ten Lives, edited by Eve Merriam.

October 24 — History of Women

Fourth group meeting — Lecture or film (30-45 minutes) based on women in history. Discuss why women have been left out of history, and the important contributions made by women. List of important women to be identified - handout. (Make up list from Century of Struggle.)

Suggested resources:

(1) Century of Struggle, by Eleanor Flexnor

(2) MWC slide presentation -"Women in History"

(3) Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings, edited by Miriam Schneir

(4) Problems of Women's Liberation, by Evelyn Reed

October 31 — History of Women (continued)

Fifth group meeting — Continue discussion of history focusing on Growing Up Female in America: Ten Lives

Assign: The New Feminism, by Lucy Komisar

November 7	History of the Current Women's Movement; 30-45 minutes
Sixth group meeting	Discuss myth vs reality - media images of women's liberationists as opposed to the real people involved; handout with important events Suggested resources: (1) Sisterhood is Powerful, introduction, edited by Robin Morgan (2) The Feminine Mystique, by Betty Freidan (3) Woman's Estate, by Juliet Mitchell
November 14	Status of the Current Women's Movement
Seventh group meeting	Panel of women representing various points of view on the movement. Each person will present her analysis and philosophy or idealogy regarding the movement. Discussion of issues; i.e., minority women, abortion, ERA, etc. Panel could be made up of a member of N.O.W., someone from Minnesota Women's Political Caucus, a member of the Minnesota Feminists (campus women's liberation group). a member of the Twin Cities Women's Union or others. Suggested resources: (1) Rebirth of Feminism by Hole and Levine (2) Feminism and Socialism, edited by Jenness (3) Problems of Women's Liberation, by Reed (4) Radical Feminism, by Koedt, Levine, Rapone (5) Dialectic of Sex, by Shulamith Firestone
November 21	Now That We're So Well Informed, Where Do We Go From Here?
Eighth group meeting	Discuss student projects. By this time each participant should be fairly certain about her/his project and should be able to share with others a description of it. This is an opportunity for questions regarding anything involved with the course and sharing experiences. Journals due.
November 28	A Party
Final group meeting	Finish up for the quarter. Further discussion of projects; all projects should be underway. Some dates should be confirmed at high schools. Evaluation session dates should be confirmed.

APPENDIX 1

DIRECTED STUDY WOMEN'S STUDIES PROJECT LISTING

Introducing High School Students to the Women's Movement, in which undergraduates will spend fall quarter preparing for an interaction with high school students during winter quarter. The undergraduates will prepare presentations appropriate for high school audiences or develop projects which will facilitate interaction. Fall, four credits. Winter credit arranged.

APPENDIX 2

ADVERTISEMENT

Wednesday, April 4, 1973

Thursday, April 5, 1973

Minnesota Daily

COURSES ABOUT WOMEN

Directed study courses available:

1) Introducing high school students to the Women's Movement
2) The role of women throughout the world

Sponsored by: **Living Learning Center** and **Minnesota Women's Center**

For information, call Etta Magnusen 373-3850

APPENDIX 3

NEWS RELEASE

'U' STUDENTS RESEARCH
FEMINISM FOR METRO AREA
HIGH SCHOOLS

(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
NEWS SERVICE-S 68 MORRILL HALL
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55455
APRIL 4, 1973

NEWSMEN: For further information contact
VALERIE CUNNINGHAM, 373-7516

A group of University of Minnesota students are taking a course this spring designed to prepare them to speak on feminist issues in area high schools.

Students enrolled in the course, "Introducing High School Students to the Women's Movement," will spend the month of April researching a topic dealing with one area of the women's movement. Beginning in May the students will speak, on request, to Twin Cities area high school classes.

"We're going to break the broad topic of the women's movement down into smaller areas, such as the history of the movement, or sociological or psychological aspects or the law," said Etta Magnusen, coordinator of the independent study course offered through the Minnesota Women's Center on campus.

Ms. Magnusen said women's groups frequently get requests from high schools and other groups who need speakers on women's issues. She said the class is designed to meet that need.

The class will also help the University students involved develop knowledge of the women's movement, she added. Students will put together presentations on their topics which will be evaluted by Women's Center staff before students begin appearing in high schools.

Teachers who contact the Women's Center now may suggest areas for the University students to research which would be useful for high school classes.

Any high school staff member who wants to arrange for a presentation by University students should contact Ms. Magnusen at the Minnesota Women's Center, 301 Walter Library, or call 373-3850.

-UNS-

(A1-A5,A10,A21,A27;B1,E29)

(copy)

APPENDIX 4

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

Minnesota Women's Center
301 Walter Library
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

LETTER TO HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

March 30, 1973

To the Principal:

The Minnesota Women's Center will be sponsoring an independent study project for undergraduate students during the Spring quarter 1973 (March 29-June 15) entitled "Introducing High School Students to the Women's Movement." The purpose of the project is twofold, first to provide university students with an opportunity to develop their knowledge of the women's movement and turn it into a workable skill. Secondly, there is an increasing demand from metropolitan high schools for feminist speakers.

The university students will choose an area of personal interest such as history, sociology, psychology or the law and develop presentations appropriate for high school students. If anyone on your faculty is interested in taking advantage of this resource, please telephone me at the Minnesota Women's Center, 373-3850.

Sincerely,

Etta Magnusen, Co-ordinator
Minnesota Women's Center

P.S. There may be an opportunity for anyone calling early in the quarter to specify ideas for topics to be developed.

APPENDIX 5

PROPOSAL FORM OUTLINE

I. TITLE: Give your study a title. It should be a good capsule definition of what your study is really about. For instance, "A Study of Student to Student Helping Processes in Experimental Learning Programs in Four Inner-City High Schools; An analysis of the dynamics of peer group assistance."

II. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE: This section should cover how you came to be interested in the subject area and why you personally are undertaking the project at this time. You might include reference here to your personal qualifications for such study; how it relates to your personal background in general, etc. You should also talk about the "importance" of the study (how does it relate to contemporary problems, etc.?) This section differs from "Objectives" in that it is a relatively more personalized and general description of why you are doing the project, while objectives should be more specific.

III. OBJECTIVES - PROJECT GOALS: This section is a crucial listing of what it is that you're trying to learn. Usually, objectives can best be stated in question-form; what are those for which you are seeking answers? When project goals are conceptualized in this fashion, it is easier to distinguish between the goals and the methods of study.

For instance, "To subject myself to a foreign life-style" is a method for realizing certain project goals (answering certain project questions). It is important to distinguish between project goals (<u>what</u> you're after) and project methods (<u>ways</u> of finding answers).

IV. RESOURCES: Given your project questions (goals) what "things" might hold the answers you are seeking? These "things" might be people, places, activities, readings, etc. Resources may be conceived of as "containers of information" that need to be opened by certain procedures (methods).

V. METHODS: Given your objectives and your resources, methods include ways of relating the former to the latter. In other words, given the questions at hand, what do you have to do to "pry open" the resources for answers? Will you <u>interview</u> parents and faculty? <u>Observe</u> classroom behavior of students? <u>Experiment</u> with different seating arrangements, etc.? Which methodical activities will yield what kinds of results?

VI. DISCIPLINARY STRUCTURE AND THEORETICAL ORIENTATION: What academic disciplines and/or theories does your proposed study involve? Does this project fall into one specific discipline (Library Science?) or is it interdisciplinary in approach? ("Psycho-social variables of creativity in prisoners at Stillwater Prison", or maybe, "art according to psychoanalytic theory.")

VII. FEEDBACK: What will you produce as an outcome of your study (research paper, multi-media presentation, journal or log of your experiences, new course proposal, photo essay, etc., etc.)? Be creative!!!

VIII. EVALUATION: By whom do you wish to be evaluated? How often? Remember that University faculty members are only one source of evaluation. How about yourself, other students working on similar projects, professionals in the field, community persons with relevant real-life experiences, etc.? Should your evaluation take the form of a grade? How about P - N options?

IX. STUDY SCHEDULE: When will you be doing this? What? Are there natural divisions in your project? How much time will you be spending on the project? (How many hours per week? How many quarters?)

X. CREDITS: How many credits are you requesting? What type of credits (upper/lower division, in what department, etc.)?

XI. FACULTY MONITORS: Who do you have or who do you need to monitor the project? How do they relate to your project?

XII. BIBLIOGRAPHY: Make a listing of related reading you may wish to pursue.

APPENDIX 6

PROJECT EVALUATION

1. Prior to this presentation, what was your main source of information about the women's movement?

2. Based on the information from that source, describe the women's movement in a single sentence.

3. What did that source make you feel about the women's movement?

4. How would you describe the women's movement in one sentence now?

5. Did anything you learn from the presentation surprise you? If so, what was it?

6. Which part of today's class did you enjoy the most?

7. Which part did you learn from?

8. Could the presentation be changed to keep your interest? (What should be emphasized, eliminated, etc.?)

9. Do you feel you now have enough information to tell someone else what the women's movement is and what it is working for? Why or why not?

10. Would you like to see another (different) presentation on the women's movement? Why or why not?

APPENDIX 7

COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

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